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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

Writings

OF THE

CRAFTSMAN.

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CRAFTSMAN.

I Am not ignorant of the unequal Terms, upon which he enters the Lists in a Paper-War, who draws his Pen on the Defensive Side; those, who engage the Malice of Mankind to their Party, will generally, I fear, lead more numerous Troops, and find much better Encouragement than

thoſe, who ſollicit their good Nature, or appeal to their Juſtice.

For, as moſt Men have Paſſions, whilſt few are bleſſed with Underſtandings; and that there are many more, who are ready to ſneer, than are capable to judge, or willing to acquit; ſo the Glare of a declamatory Invective, tho' never ſo ill founded, will dazzle much greater Numbers, than the cleareſt Reaſoning, and moſt concluſive Arguments will ever enlighten.

But notwithſtanding the Diſadvantages, which from the Imperfection of human Kind, they ſometimes labour under, who undertake the juſter Cauſe; as I flatter my ſelf, that on ſome Occaſions, the Honeſty of our Minds may recoil againſt this Propenſity to Satyr, and that what is too general, is not univerſal; ſince I imagine there are Caſes, where People may be more ſhock'd at the Morals of a Satyriſt, than pleaſed with his Wit, and will not ſuffer the Depravity of their Natures to be flattered at the Expence of their

their Principles ; I ſhall not be deter'd, by the Diſcouragements I have enumerated, nor the Fear of incurring that Ridicule, which often attends being ſerious, from entring into a ſhort Examination of the original Deſign, Progreſs, and Effects, of the Writings of the *Craftſman*, who ſeems of late, under the Shelter of the Law, and an Affectation of telling bold Truths, to have uſurped a Right of circulating guarded Treaſons, and weekly Falſhoods, throughout the whole Kingdom.

He has, by a Sort of Papal Authority, taken upon him to cite, expound and comment upon our *Engliſh* Hiſtory, as dogmatically, as unfairly, and often as ignorantly, as his Holineſs himſelf ever did on the Scriptures ; he perverts Characters and Meanings, as the other does Texts and Doctrines, and like him, when he does not find the Originals appoſite to his Purpoſe, his Invention ſupplies his Learning, and he makes them ſo.

But unleſs he could contrive, that the Reading of our Hiſtorians ſhould be prohibited to his Followers, as that of the Goſpel is to the Pope's, his Frauds may chance to be detected, the Sect of *Janſeniſts* to his Doctrine encreaſe, and Mr. *Danvers*'s Bulls not received with that implicit Faith, and blind Submiſſion, which is paid to thoſe of *Rome*.

To point out the Rancour, the Acrimony, and Virulence with which all his Productions are fraught, would be an unneceſſary, and tedious Task; it would be tedious, as every Paper, and almoſt every Paragraph, he has written, might be quoted as ſo many accumulated Proofs; and it would be unneceſſary, becauſe ſuch Proofs, tho' they would caſt a Reflection upon him, would not wipe off thoſe he has endeavoured to caſt upon others.

For as the Brutality of an Executioner does not prove the Innocence of him who ſuffers; ſo it is poſſible for a Criminal to deſerve his Puniſhment, tho'

tho' one abhors the Hand that ſeems to take a Pleaſure in inflicting it.

My Deſign therefore is, to ſhew the Falſhood of theſe Authors Indictments, and the Unfairneſs of their Proſecutions; to conſider the Allegations, without entering into the Characters of thoſe who advance them, and without expatiating on the trite Topicks of the Deſpair, and Profligacy of ſome of the Fraternity; the Envy, Ambition, and Diſappointment of others; and the want of Temper, Candour and Judgment in all; I ſhall curſorily run through the Steps of their Performances, and as Circumſtances occur, occaſionally in ſome few Inſtances obſerve, how far their Aſſertions tally with Truth, their Quotations with Hiſtory, their Conduct with their Profeſſions, and even their Writings with Themſelves.

When firſt this meritorious and laudable Work was undertaken, many pompous Profeſſions were made to the World, and many ſpecious Pleas were

brought for ſetting it on Foot; private Views wore the Mask of publick Good; Ambition cloathed itſelf in Popularity; the Spirit of Reſentment took the Title of the Spirit of Liberty; and the Welfare of the Nation, and Loyalty to the King, were made the plauſible Pretences for throwing amongſt his People the Seeds of Clamour againſt his Miniſters, and his Meaſures; for preaching Sedition, and endeavouring to infuſe Diſcontent into the Hearts of all his Subjects.

For a little while indeed all the Arrows in the *Craftſman's* Quiver, ſeemed directed ſolely at one Mark; they were levell'd at a Miniſter, whom one of this Club (one whoſe Prudence was never reckon'd by his beſt Friends his principal Virtue) was ſo unguarded, in his Enmity to declare, *he would perſue to his Deſtruction*; he publickly ſwore his Ruin; but tho' he bound himſelf under this Curſe, Providence has ſo ordain'd, that had he not eat nor drank till he had compleated it

and

and ſlain *Paul*, he muſt long ago have been ſtarved.

HOWEVER the whole Stream of their Malice, for ſome Time, flowed only in this Channel, to vilify this Miniſter's Name, to arraign his Conduct, depreciate his Services, blacken his Character, and weaken his Credit, both with his Prince and his Fellow-Subjects; all Hands were imployed, and all Engines ſet at Work; Manuſcripts were circulated, the Preſs loaded, Coffee-Houſe Talkers, Table-Wits, and Bottle-Companions had their Inſtructions given them; and the groſſeſt Falſhoods were inculcated in the groſſeſt Terms; the ſacred Correſpondences in former Friendſhips were perverted, the Secrets diſcloſed, and all the Laws of Nature, Cuſtom, Principle, Morality and Society trampled on, and broken.

WHEN the Sources of their Invention grew dry, Libraries were ranſack'd, the Annals of all Ages were turned over, and Extracts made, out

of the worſt Characters, that the Hiſtorians, or *Calebs*, of other Times ever tranſmitted to Poſterity, to be applied to theſe.

The *Sejanus's* and *Wolſey's* of former Ages, the *Menzikof's* and *Coſcia's* of later Dates, were deſcribed in their blackeſt Colours; and Parallels were drawn between Perſons and Characters, where no Similitude or Affinity could ever have been found, if the Records of other Ages had not been copied by the Slander of this.

When they found the Words of the Authors they referr'd to not ſtrong enough, the Weight of their own was added, and convey'd in borrowed Names: *Italicks* pointing out the favourite Paſſages, and the Coinage of Moderns comma'd on the Side, was often inſerted, like Quotations from the Ancients, for whole Paragraphs together.

But the Man, whom the Madneſs of their Inveteracy in ſo indecent a Manner,

Manner, continued to pelt with this Series of Ribaldry, being as much Superior to his Antagoniſts in Temper, as in Judgment, cooly ſtood the ſucceſſive Shocks of their waſted Fire; equally invulnerable in his Quiet, and in his Character.

He contemned Accuſations, which his own Conſcience did not ſecond; nor took *the Voice of his Enemies for the Voice of the People*; He conſidered all their Clamour, as the natural Effects of Competition, and Diſappointment; and look'd upon this Tryal of his Patience, as the Tax every Miniſter muſt pay for Royal Favours; ſince Envy will always paint thoſe moſt black, whom Princes moſt diſtinguiſh, as ſurely as the Shadows of thoſe will always ſeem deepeſt, on whom the Sun ſhines the brighteſt.

But when this Scent became ſo cold, that political Sportſmen grew weary of following a Pack of Animals, who were always barking at a Prey they could not Wound, and following what

what they could not overtake; and that theſe Writers had rung the Changes on the Words, *Corruption*, *Bribery*, *Male-Adminiſtration*, *Oppreſſion* and *Injuſtice*, till People were ſo habituated to the *Vox et præterea nihil*, that the Peal laid thoſe to ſleep, whom the Ringers propoſed it ſhould alarm; they began to find that other Forces muſt be drawn out, new Batteries form'd, and new Places attack'd.

However I muſt obſerve here, that during their Chace after this Miniſter, they had from Time to Time made great Profeſſions to the Prince he ſerv'd, of their Loyalty to his Government, and Affection to his Perſon; tho' they were at the ſame Moment exclaiming againſt every Step of his Meaſures, and every Action of his Reign.

How they propoſed His Majeſty ſhould reconcile theſe general Profeſſions, with ſuch particular Reflexions, I know not; but I ſhould think the Alternative, they gave him, of being unjuſt enough to abett the flagrant Iniquities

quities they complain'd of, or blind enough not to perceive them, was one, which neither he, nor any one who has the Honour to know him, would look upon, as any very great Compliment, either to his Head, or his Heart.

And if there were any lengths of Abſurdity, to which the Vanity of human Nature could not carry ſome of thoſe, in whoſe Compoſition it preſides the ſtrongeſt, one would wonder, how a Set of Writers could hope to have Art enough to ſucceed in flattering a Prince, whoſe Underſtandings had already miſcarried in the low Endeavours of cajoling a Mob.

But as the Idle, the Profligate, and the Deſperate have Time enough to ſpare, no Characters to loſe, and no worſe Situation to fear; ſo theſe Gentlemen knew, whatever Project they engaged in, provided they eſcaped Hanging, (and even that Danger ſome of them perhaps may poſſibly be inured to) they could be no great Sufferers by the Miſcarriage,

carriage ; and ſhould remain, but where they were.

PURSUANT therefore to the Scheme of trying what could be done by Flattery, they were perpetually declaring themſelves not Jacobites, but Patriots; they gave up *Fog* for ſuch ; but at the ſame Time, that they were treading in his Steps, talking in his Style, and fighting under his Banner, they profeſſed an Abhorrence to his Cauſe : As if the whole World muſt not perceive, that their only Option was owning themſelves Knaves enough to be Confederates in it, or weak enough to be the Tools of it.

HOWEVER they abjured *Fog's* Appellation, and ſtuck to their own ; ſo that this Sect of Patriots was to Jacobites, what Socinians were to Arians, and Pironiſts to Scepticks; they preach'd the ſame Doctrine, and held the ſame Tenets, but took a different Name, and endeavoured, by the ſubtle Sophiſtry of Words, logically to prove a Diſtinction, where there was eſſentially no Difference.

UNDER this affected Title, and with ſuch ſhallow Artifices, they labour'd to convince the King of the Attachment they had to his Perſon, whilſt they were railing at his Government; and of the Zeal they had for Him, whilſt they were obſtructing all his Meaſures.

NOR did they ever ſlip any Occaſion to aſſure him, how poſſible it was, without the leaſt leaning to the Pretender, to act conſtantly in concert with his Agents; and without any Tincture of Republican Principles, to be always inveighing againſt the Dangers and Inconveniencies of the moſt limited Monarchy.

AT length finding theſe Abſurdities and Contradictions too groſs to paſs, and all their ingratiating Schemes abortive, they grew weary of the Conſtraint of ſpeaking a Language ſo foreign to their Hearts; and reſolved at once to throw both the Mask and Scabbard aſide, to temporize no longer,

but openly to attack even that ſacred Perſon, which hitherto they had only dared obliquely to touch, and collaterally to glance at.

The Tranſition was eaſy from Miniſters to Princes; and the ſame Methods that had ſerved to defame the one, were now imployed to depreciate the other. The whole Artillery of Pamphleteers, Ballad-mongers, and Libellers was drawn out; they recurr'd again to Hiſtory for Parallels, they quoted Tyrants in Italicks, ſhow'd by what Steps Revolutions might be form'd; and reſolved, ſince they could not prevail on the King to change his Miniſtry, to try if they could not perſwade the People to change their King.

A Prince, whoſe perſonal Courage has been ſo often prov'd, whoſe Juſtice was never call'd in Queſtion, and whoſe Abilities are equal to his Application, was often hinted at by theſe loyal and worthy Gentlemen, in Suggeſtions, which

which any other Author muſt ſhare their Crime, to be able to repeat without bluſhing.

He has been deſcribed as a Prince who delighted only in Troops and Taxes; tho' every Action of his Reign demonſtrates, what his every Declaration from the Throne has profeſs'd, that his conſtant and ſteady Aim, is the Eaſe and Peace of his Subjects, in the Reduction of both.

If train'd in Camps, and expoſed in the Confederate Armies and common Cauſe of Europe, the Glory of his earlier Years was Bravery and Succeſs in War; how naturally might the Fame he acquired by his Sword, have biaſs'd his Mind to that noble Imperfection of the greateſt Souls, the Love of exerciſing it.

But if the ſecret Inclinations of his Heart, did rather lean towards the Scenes of Action, than the Paths of Quiet; and that he was more delighted

with a Military than a Civil Fame (tho' with equal Abilities to acquire either) what Obligations muſt that People have to him, of whom he choſe rather to be the Guardian than the Leader? whoſe Welfare he preferr'd to his own Paſſions, and for whom, declining all the dazling Trophies of Conqueſt for himſelf, he has been conſtantly endeavouring, with a juſter Pride, to procure all the national Advantages of Peace?

WHENEVER he has been croſs'd or retarded in this Purſuit, with what Induſtry have theſe Authors aſcribed all the natural Ebbs and Flows of the Power and Intereſts of Europe, and the neceſſary Viciſſitudes and Fluctuations of human Affairs, to Errors and Defects in the Councils of *Great-Britain*.

THEY have as ignorantly as unfairly ſpoken of foreign Tranſactions, like domeſtick Meaſures: As if Treaties could be made like Acts of Parliament, and the ſame Advantages procured to any one State at a Congreſs, where all . . . . . Nations

Nations are laying in their different Claims, and mutually to be conſidered; as in a Senate, where the Welfare of one People only is to be regarded, and the diſtinct Intereſt of each Particular makes the joint Intereſt of the whole Body.

With what Clamour have they inculcated the Decline of our Credit, and the Decay of our Trade; whilſt it is demonſtrably true, notwithſtanding the Reduction of the national Intereſt for Money, that the one is at this Moment at as high a Mark, as ever it was known to ſtand; nor is it leſs ſure, that the Suſpenſion of the other, as it was unavoidably owing to the late Commotions in Europe, ſo muſt its Revival be the certain, tho' gradual Conſequence of the Treaty of *Seville*, and thoſe Commotions ſubſiding.

With the ſame Induſtry, and the ſame Juſtice, have they ſuggeſted the Sacrifice the King is always ready to make

make of the Intereſt of his *Engliſh* to his foreign Dominions: Few Words are ſufficient to the reaſonable and the candid, to obviate that Aſperſion; and with the weak and the factious, who is idle enough to expoſtulate? When the King had his Option of Peace with the Empire, or Peace with *Spain*, which was the Intereſt of *Hanover*, and which was the Intereſt of *Great Britain?* Which did he reject, and which did he chuſe? Which Power did he defy, and which did he careſs?

Another faſhionable Topick in their Philipicks has been the *Corruption* of the Times: This Word has been banded about with ſuch ſtrong *Innuendos* and round Aſſertions, (for Examples and Proofs are never the Tools theſe Gentlemen work with) that ſome have been weak enough to doubt, whether there may not have been ſome Shadow of Truth, in what I take to be ſo utterly falſe, that I believe I may venture to ſay, this is almoſt the only Court, the only Reign, in which no one

one ſingle Inſtance was ever pretended to be given, of Solicitation made, or Favour ſhown, by the Force of Money.

But had all theſe Repreſentations they have made of the Decline, Contempt, and Corruption of our Situation been faithful Reports, where muſt the Odium have fallen but on the Head of our State. Were he a ſlothful, an ignorant or an indolent Prince, others might have incurr'd it; but as few are ſo ill inform'd, as not to know, from the minuteſt to the moſt material Tranſactions, both at Home and Abroad, that all who have the Honour to ſerve him, are rather his Agents than his Deputies, that they are the Miniſters of his Dictates, and not the Executers of their own Projects; ſince I ſay every Thing is known to paſs thro' that Centre, had their Inſinuations been true, they knew the Demerit would have been only his, who now enjoys all the Honour of their being falſe.

Nor

Nor has the indefatigable Aſſiduity of *Mr. Danvers* for the Service of his Majeſty, confined itſelf meerly to the Advancement of his Honour as a King; but with equal good Will extended it ſelf, even to the Care of his domeſtick Happineſs.

In this View (for in what other could it be?) he has, with a Morality not inferior to his Loyalty, not only dared to inſult the Majeſty of the beſt Queen, but endeavour'd to caſt a Shade over the Virtues of the beſt Woman.

One not leſs amiable in every private Walk of Life, than perfect in her publick Station; for as in the latter her Liberality ſo many have proved, her Affability all partake, and her univerſal Benevolence on every Occurrence is ſhown; ſo in the other, what Examples can be given, in any Rank of Life, of a better Wife, a better Mother, a better Miſtreſs, or a better Friend?

If theſe Appellations ſeem too familiar, I hope I ſhall be forgiven the Uſe of them, ſince ſhe, to whom they are applied, ſeems more ſollicitous to acquire, and prouder to deſerve them; than any others Ambition can covet, or Fortune can beſtow.

For as ſhe is ſenſible, that the one, Merit only can poſſeſs; whilſt the reſt are daily obtain'd by the Accident of Birth or Advantages of Alliance; ſo ſhe prefers thoſe Titles, which ſhe can only enjoy in common with the Virtuous, to all thoſe leſs valuable Diſtinctions, which with Diadems, and Purple, ſhe might wear in common with the Vicious.

Nor can the *Craftſman* boaſt a greater Fidelity to Hiſtory on her Chapter, than on moſt others; for in ſpeaking of *Edward* the Fourth's Queen, that Particular excepted of the beſt Employments being ingroſs'd by her Relations, to which not the leaſt Sha-

dow of a Parallel can be pretended in this Reign; his Report of the dead is little juſter than his Suggeſtions of the living; he hardly aſperſes the Memory of the one, leſs than in falſifying the Character of the other. But as none are blind enough to miſtake from what Motives he tranſgreſſes the Laws of Truth upon this Occaſion; ſo no Body, I fancy, will be much puzzled to determine, which Queen is moſt obliged to him.

But what Effect can theſe Authors flatter themſelves ſuch Papers can produce? Do they imagine the gradual Eſteem and Reverence for her Character, built on an Experience of ſo many Years, can be overturn'd by the manifeſt Injuſtice and Malice of one Libel? Or, do they mean to inſinuate, that Kings, like Hermits, are to be excluded all Society, and deprived of thoſe Bleſſings which the meaneſt of their Subjects may enjoy?

Can a reaſonable, or a ſocial Mind imagine human Nature capable of greater Felicity, than a Commerce contracted by Inclination, ſtrengthened by Eſteem, and rivetted by Habit? If there is none ſuperior, and that being a Prince is to debar the Enjoyment of it, I know not whether it be true what *Cato* ſays of the Poſt of Honour, but I am ſure the Poſt of Happineſs muſt be a private Station.

On the other Side, If this Happineſs be not leſs compatible with Grandeur, than with Obſcurity; and that the Importance of a King's Secrets, ſhould only make him more cautious where they are confided; to whom can they with leſs Danger be communicated, where with more Safety depoſited, than in the Breaſt of one, whoſe Intereſt by Situation muſt be his own, and whoſe whole Life has been one uninterrupted Series of Proofs, that ſhe has no Pleaſure but the procuring his, no Choice but his Will.

His Honour is her's, his Safety is her's, and his Proſperity is her's; and if it were poſſible for her to taſte of Happineſs after the Loſs of that ſhe enjoys in him, where could ſhe turn her Eyes to find it, but in the Proſpect of his Crown ſafely tranſmitted to the joint Monument of their Affection, his and her Poſterity?

With what Views then could theſe Authors, as ignorantly with Regard to paſt Times, as fruitleſly with Regard to the preſent, coin the abſurd Aſſertion, of the Downfall of the Houſe of *York* being the Effect of the Conduct of *Edward* the Fourth's Queen? I can conceive no other Motive for it, than the ſhort-lived chimerical Pleaſure it gave them, to prophecy Ruin to a Family, from which as they have never deſerv'd, they never expect any Favour.

Do theſe Suggeſtions then ſpring from a *Spirit of Liberty?* or are they merely the Overflowings of the Spirit

rit of Faction? *Mr. Danvers* ſays, they never ſubſiſt together. *Quam temere in noſmet leges ſancimus iniquas?* For if this Poſition be true, how little of the Spirit of Liberty can there be at any Time in the Conduct of thoſe, who were often ſo evidently actuated by the Prejudices of the other.

I OWN it unfair to turn this Maxim upon him; ſince in chiming upon theſe two Phraſes, he hardly oftener aſſerts their being incompatible, than he gives Inſtances of their not being ſo.

ONE Proof (beſides many others I could produce) of His Examples jarring with this Maxim, is his ſaying in the *Craftſman* of *October* the 3d, that in the Contentions of the *Yorkiſts* and *Lancaſtrians*, *Tho' each Side contended to have a King of their own, neither Party would have a Tyrant; they ſacrificed their Lives to Faction, but would not give up their Liberties*; This ſure demonſtrates, that the Spirit of

of Faction did reign, even among theſe Champions for Liberty; and much plainer, I believe, than the *Craftſman* can prove, that the Spirit of Liberty ever moves his Engines of Faction.

I ſhould grow very tedious if in this Paper I ſhould launch into a farther Diſquiſition of all the contradictory Rodomontades I could point out in his Performances; I ſhall therefore conclude with ſaying, That be his Hopes never ſo ſanguine, his Prophecies never ſo ſtrong, his Writings never ſo inflamatory, and his Endeavours never ſo indefatigable; Whether *HENRY* was merely *a Creature of the People* or not; whether they were Loſers by his bad Qualities, or Gainers by his great ones; Whether *Edward* the Fourth's Queen was ſo great and able a Woman, as *Rapin* deſcribes her, or ſo ſhort-ſighted an Intriguer as Mr. *Danvers* repreſents her; Whether *new Kings* are always agreeable to a Nation or not; and whether *Caleb* and *Fog*, or their Directors or Emiſſaries, have a diſtinct

or

or united Aim; I do firmly believe, that the Peace and Happineſs of *England* are too deeply rooted in *the preſent Houſe of York*, for the Nation ever to be mad enough at the Inſtigations of the *Craftſman*, to riſque the tranſplanting them into *his Houſe of Lancaſter*.

FINIS.